

Kansas Trails Council

ESTABLISHED IN 1974

Volume XXXVII, Issue 1

Newsletter

March 2011

Improved Stihl Backpack Sprayer

One of our most effective trail tools has proven to be the least ergonomic and hardest to carry for the distance needed each spring season. Carrying close to five gallons of product in a backpack sprayer is my least favorite thing. Being near the target area so as to start unloading asap isn't always possible so you suffer and hike.

This winter I hatched a plan to upgrade the shoulder straps and improve ergonomics for carrying a Stihl brand backpack sprayer. A search on the internet provided what I thought could be a workable solution: introducing the



MOLLE. Pronounce it however you like, it is a military acronym for Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment. I found a complete setup where America shops, eBay, buy it now price, \$24.99+\$12.55 shipping. The description read "assembly required". When the package arrived and opened, I knew I was in big trouble. There was no way I was going to figure out how to rig the assortment of pads, straps and snaps on the backboard but it all looked to be well made of heavy nylon and Cordura.

An hour later after another internet search and a YouTube video with survivalist Daryl showing his brother Daryl how to rig a MOLLE pack setup, I had one assembled backpack/shoulder strap/waist strap assembly ready to mate to the stock Stihl backpack sprayer. A trip to ACE for some spacers, straps and hardware provided the means to

mate the two together. I hit on an idea to bolt and belt the assemblies together that should provide all the access to the sprayer needed as well as work together with the MOLLE backboard system in a reliable way. I probably could have used a single belt, but redundancy in these cases generally adds up to increased reliability. They were out of the



Desert Camo webbing so I settled for the red they had in stock, you can only be just so stealthy carrying one of these things. Introducing the Stihl Stealth backpack sprayer, this baby's built for comfort not for speed. If you are interested in converting from the crummy stock shoulder straps to this type of setup I can snap more photos and email.

Terry Plenert
Board Member, Fall River Trail Coordinator



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Trail Reports

Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

One reroute of the Blue trail at Mile 1.25 this spring will complete the mud eradication projects for awhile. The trail armoring and reroutes completed last fall held up well in the wet winter conditions and have made the first mile on both trails much more usable. In December, several sections of the Blue trail were improved with a raised trail tread on a flat section of trail and some outslope work improved drainage in the first mile.

Local trail user groups continue to trail watch and remove fallen branches on a regular basis. A special thanks goes to the Lawrence Trailhawk runners and the Lawrence Mountain Bike Club members, especially Terry Ryan, who are out there all the time! The dedicated Trailhawks are planning a trash pickup this spring around the campground trail locations.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Clinton Lake – George Latham Trail

The trails are in great shape going into the growing season. Spring trimming should be easier this year thanks to the lopping and clearing work that was done mid-winter. We plan to reset the north bench in concrete this spring as someone “borrowed” the metal post holders that used to support it.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Elk River Hiking Trail

Late March and early April is a wonderful time to take a hike on the Elk River Trail. Red buds will be blooming and trees will be getting their leaf buds making it colorful but not too leafy. The temperatures are moderate and there is water in the streams making for a very scenic hike. Long hikes are especially good this time of year and it may be a good time to think of doing the entire 15-miles if you can get transportation at each end. There are great rock formations to climb on, explore, or just look at throughout the entire trail. Good views are also expected along the ridge tops this time of year. Allow plenty of time to hike the rugged trail which is also very well marked with blue blazes. A slow to moderate hike will average about 1 mile per hour while a 2-mile per hour pace would not be too difficult for day hikers. Enjoy and explore and you will be sure to come back to see the many different parts of this 15-mile trail. The trail is currently in excellent condition. Make sure to take water to drink and to sign the trail registers at the trail heads.

Steve Siegele (steveshardware@twinmounds.com)

Fall River Lake Trails

Volunteer interest and trail use activity has increased this winter with the opening of the Badger Creek South trail. A work day in January turned into a productive day with some rock removal in specific spots and a section bench cut along a rocky ledge section. We are starting to appreciate some new tools, the Rogue Hoe 36” length



handle trail tools. Lighter than a Pulaski, they cut well on bench cutting and are less tiring. A very versatile tool at an attractive price that we are putting to good use.

In February we had another productive work day on the new Badger Creek North trail with around a half mile cleared and ready to use. The trail should be similar to the South trail and contoured on the hillside, good riding or hiking from either direction. The area is about one half flagged to date and should yield three or more miles of trail mostly under tree canopy with some nice rocks and variable terrain. The goal is to have three miles open by this summer in Badger North.

In January I met with Doug Wheeler, Resource Manager for the COE. We discussed signage for the trails along with a culvert for one trail head, some gravel for armoring the access up to the trail. We also discussed the challenge of improving and maintaining the prairie sections of the trail. Springtime at Fall River generally includes a period of high lake levels closing a road that will shut down access to the Badger area so I'll likely be working on the prairie trail in the Sunflower Hill area during that season.

Terry Plenert (PPLENERT@aol.com)

Ford County Lake

The trail conditions have been very good all winter and continue to improve these last few weeks. We haven't

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seen any vegetation growth yet but now have the equipment and chemicals to handle the poison ivy before it takes over this spring. The trail has been getting quite a bit of use from all of the local mountain bikers and hikers which have really encouraged us to keep it open and well maintained. We now have a Facebook page, Ford County Lake Trail. With the postings, we keep everyone up to date on trail conditions, upcoming events, races and results. We will lose a few mountain bike riders to road racing in a few weeks but the nicer weather should encourage more recreational riders to the trail. You can verify group rides and starting times on our Facebook page.

John Wentling (jwentling@buyggautos.com)

Melvern Lake (Eisenhower State Park)

A trail ride to benefit the West Point Equestrian Camp at Eisenhower State Park, Melvern Lake, has been scheduled for September 17-18. The Saturday ride will head east of the State Park onto federal lands only available for this ride through special use permit. Sunday's morning ride will follow the ESP blue trail along the shoreline to the west. Ride registration is \$30 and includes dinner Saturday evening and hot breakfast Sunday morning, provided by the Friends of Eisenhower State Park volunteer group. Registration deadline is Sept. 10. Contact Jim Thomas, thomasjc68@gmail.com or 785-528-4255. Contact the state park office for camping reservations: 785-528-4102 or eisenhowersp@wp.state.ks.us. Proceeds from the ride will go toward adding more corrals to the West Point Camp.

Please consider setting up a benefit ride for your favorite state park and trail area. During this time of budget cuts and shortages, it's going to take all of us to keep our favorite public areas open! To paraphrase a familiar quote, the only thing necessary for the loss of public use areas is for good people to do nothing.

As is usual, the Eisenhower State Park calendar is already beginning to include several organized trail rides. If you haven't experienced the excellent facilities and trails at ESP yet, make plans to do so in 2011!

Jim Thomas (thomasjc68@gmail.com)

Perry Lake Hiking Trails

Not much activity in the last few winter months. We're doing reconnaissance now of a few distant trail sections in preparation for spring workdays.

Dave Brackey (dbrackey@att.net)

Tuttle Creek Trails

We have been over about half of all the trails at Tuttle Creek Lake moving dead fall, loose rocks, and picking up trash. Seems like it is never-ending. There are a couple of places that are going to require major work on the Carnahan Trail, but Randolph State Park is good to go. Spring is starting to get people moving here in the northland but the ground is still wet with some frost still under the mud on the north slopes. We are hoping for a nice normal season with lots of people enjoying the trails.

Olivia Huddleston (opieh@bluevalley.net)

Topeka Trails

Dornwood Trail

Not much trail use this winter do to all the snow. However I checked out Dornwood last week and other than a downed limb here and there the trail is in good shape. I will be starting spring maintenance soon and anticipate riders and hikers visiting the trail soon and often. Hopefully we will have dryer days ahead and will be able to enjoy this great nature trail.

Russ Rupp (russ11@cox.net)

MacLennan Park (Cedar Crest) Trails

Winter weather and wet trail conditions delayed several projects in recent months. We hope to begin work this spring on a skills area using large logs which were supplied when the railroad removed some trees along their right-of-way last fall.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Wilson State Park Trails

This quarter, the number and frequency of days to work on the trail have been very limited because of weather. The



Trail Reports

first event of the year was a local mountain bike race on January 9. The trail was in great shape, but that didn't last long. On January 10, we received about 6" of snow. Since then we've had several more snows and melt offs. In between we've had a few very nice days and I've been able to do several widening projects on old bench cuts that needed attention.

Like a lot of older trails, we made many of our first bench cuts pretty narrow. In fact, we still do sometimes -- as a first pass. Although it's nice to be able to cut a bench to the desired 30" on first construction, sometimes 15" has to suffice until we have an opportunity to make it wider. Furthermore sometimes the natural out slope on a new traverse will exceed the ideal of 5%, which up to around 15% is no big deal for mountain biking. Mostly all we have to do is remove the vegetation from the tread and it's ready to ride. Then as time and priorities allow, we'll cut a bench with an out slope and width more conducive to hiking and running, as well as biking. By the way, a mountain bike trail is kind of like a pizza – even if it's not the best, it's still better than none! Fortunately, very little of this trail needs any form of rehab.



Last fall, we learned a lot about armoring over deep sand. The new section netted a half mile new trail and it has been enthusiastically received by riders, armoring and all. A few tweaks are still in the offing.

A big thanks to Palen Family Farms for lots of contributions in 2010. Also a big thanks to all who have donated to the Friends of the Trail and great support from the bike shops in Great Bend and Hays. www.palenfamilyfarms.com www.goldenbeltbicycle.com www.thehubbicycleshop.com We couldn't do it without your help.

I'm anxiously awaiting a suitable combination of available KDWP personnel and weather to burn a small section of the park where a new trail loop has been approved. Burning will remove the 2 ft or so of dry grass that conceals nuances of the landscape. With that thick carpet of dry grass gone, it is many fold easier to determine the best route of new trail. Being able to detect minor deviations in slope can mean much less work. Or it can

mean spotting a neat feature to incorporate into the trail. Pink flags await planting!



Bob Nicholson (rnicholson@fhsu.edu)

Board Members

Board Positions 1 – 6 (2010 & 2011)

- 1 - Chris Kaegi-Stephens - Valley Center
- 2 - Jim Thomas - Lyndon
- 3- Doug Palen - Glen Elder
- 4 - Olivia Huddleston - Vermillion
- 5 - Neil Taylor - Lawrence
- 6 - Susan Haynes, Secretary - Shawnee

Board Positions 7 – 12 (2011 & 2012)

- 7 - John Wentling - Dodge City
- 8 - John Haynes - Shawnee
- 9 - Lyle Riedy, Vice President - Topeka
- 10 - Michael Goodwin, Treasurer - Topeka
- 11 - Bob Nicholson, President - Hays
- 12 - Terry Plenert - Wichita

Board Meeting Minutes

February 27, 2011

Call to order

- The KTC Board met at Martinelli's in Salina, Kansas.
- Board members present were Bob Nicholson, President; Susan Haynes, Secretary; John Haynes; Olivia Huddleston; Doug Palen; Terry Plenert; Lyle Riedy; Jim Thomas; and John Wentling. Not present: Mike Goodwin, Treasurer; Chris Kaegi-Stephens; and Neil Taylor.
- The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by President Bob Nicholson.
- Minutes: Olivia moved and Jim seconded to approve the minutes of the last quarter meeting in August. Motion passed. It was noted that the Board decided to forego the 4th Quarter meeting, which is usually held in November, due to schedule conflicts and no urgent business to address.
- Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was submitted via email and reviewed by the Board. John H. moved and Doug seconded to accept the treasurer's report. Motion approved.
- Membership: A request was made that a copy of the membership list be made available to all Board members, via the easiest method, so they may aid in updating memberships.
- Grant Possibilities: Discussion suggested the Horse Thief Reservoir as one possibility. The Board also revisited the topics of the role of KTC in promoting trail use, uniform signage, highway signage, and the website. Doug and Jim have contacts in some of these areas which they will check into and report back to the Board.
- Nomination of Officers: After discussion John H. moved and Jim seconded to continue with the current slate of officers. Motion passed. Board positions 7-12 will be up for election this summer.

Trail Coordinators:

- Ford County report: John W. reported on the Ford County Lake Trail. There have been 85 regular users on the trail. Users include hikers, bikers, and equestrians. A Face Book page is available that includes info on the weather for the trail, as well as ride info, etc.
- Horse Thief Reservoir: John W. said that a plan is in place to try to keep down the poison ivy.

- Tuttle Creek: Olivia reported that Carnahan had 32 feet of flood water in 2010 and there is some major repair to be done. The state park is finishing installing more pads with electrical hookups.
- Eisenhower: Jim said that culverts and gates had been installed to alleviate wet areas on the trail.
- Dornwood: Lyle said that a new person has taken over and there are more bikers and walkers on the trail. The Governor's Trail now has four miles usable and has seen a lot of bikers and runners.
- Perry: Lyle reported the trail is in good shape and has usage mostly by hikers and runners.
- Fall River Lake Trails: Terry related that the prairie area with its loose scree soil erodes easily and is requiring a lot of maintenance. The Badger Creek Trail has five miles open in good shape.
- Hays: Bob reported that a local group is putting in an interpretive trail in the area of the Sternberg Museum that will be about one to one and a half miles long. It is expected to be used a lot for school groups.
- Wilson: Bob discussed a burn project that is being considered for this spring.
- Next meeting: The next Board meeting will be on April 10, 2011 in Lawrence at a location to be determined.
- Doug moved and John H. seconded that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:46 PM.

Susan Haynes
Secretary



2011 1st Quarter Board Meeting

The 1st Quarter KTC Board meeting will be held in Lawrence on April 10, 2011 at 1:00 PM at a location to be announced.

**Kansas Trails Council
PO Box 695
Topeka, KS 66601-0695**

Supporting Kansas Trails

It's that time again to renew your membership in the KTC. Did you know that we maintain about 250 miles of trails in the state? We are able to do all this because of the generous support of our members who contribute their time and funds. We couldn't do all this without your support. We would like to extend a special thanks to Phil Roudebush who continues to support Kansas Trails with his generous donations.

If you are not already a member, we hope you will join us in developing and maintaining trails in Kansas by becoming a member of the KTC. If you have a favorite trail you would like to support, we hope you will consider making a donation to the KTC Friends of the Trail program. Your tax deductible contribution will be used solely to support the trail(s) you select. The KTC is a non-profit, 501c3 organization. We appreciate your continued support of Kansas Trails!

KANSAS TRAILS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP FORM - 2011

I would like to: Join Renew my Membership in the Kansas Trails Council for Calendar Year 2011

Name _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email: _____

NOTE: It is the KTC's policy that the above information will only be used internally by the KTC and will not be distributed to any other entity. In the interest of conserving resources (time, postage, copying, etc.) and being more environmentally friendly, the KTC newsletter is primarily distributed by email. If you prefer to receive the newsletter by regular U.S. mail, please check the box on the right and your name will be added to the newsletter mailing list.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

AMOUNT

Lifetime Membership: (One-time payment, no annual dues)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$100.00
Annual Dues:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual \$10
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family \$25
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Affiliate \$25 (groups, clubs, etc.)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trails Supporter \$101 - \$249
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trails Patron \$250 - \$499
	<input type="checkbox"/>	KTC Sponsor \$500+
		\$ _____

Optional "Friend of the Trail" Contribution (any amount is appreciated) \$ _____

Please designate the trail(s) you would like to support with your Friend of the Trail donation.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinton Lake - George Latham Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Clinton Lake - North Shore Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Elk City Lake - Eagle Rock Bike Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Elk City Lake - Elk River Hiking Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Elk City Lake - Table Mound Hiking Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> El Dorado Lake Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Fall River Lake Trails
<input type="checkbox"/> Ford County State Lake Trails
<input type="checkbox"/> Melvern Lake - Ike's Trail | <input type="checkbox"/> Perry Lake Bike Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Perry Lake Hiking Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuttle Creek - Carnahan Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuttle Creek - Randolph Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Topeka - Dornwood Park Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Topeka - MacLennan Park Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Toronto Lake Trails
<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson Lake State Park Trails
<input type="checkbox"/> Melvern Lake - Crooked Knee Horse Trail |
|---|---|

(Annual Dues + Friend of the Trail Contribution) **Total Amount Enclosed** \$ _____

KTC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Friends of the Trail donations are used directly to maintain the selected trail(s) and are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Please mail to: Kansas Trails Council ■ PO Box 695 ■ Topeka, KS 66601-0695

Website: www.kansastrailscouncil.org